



Plate 40 The three modes of nature are the cause of all material activities.
(pp.223-224)

Chapter 14: The Three Modes of Material Nature

TEXT 14

*yada sattve pravṛddhe tu
pralayam yati deha-bhṛt
tadottama-vidam lokan
amalan pratipadyate*

SYNONYMS

yada—when; *sattve*—mode of goodness; *pravṛddhe*—in development; *tu*—but; *pralayam*—dissolution; *yati*—goes; *deha-bhṛt*—embodied; *tada*—at that time; *uttama-vidam*—of the great sages; *lokan*—the planets; *amalan*—pure; *pratipadyate*—attains.

TRANSLATION

When one dies in the mode of goodness, he attains to the pure higher planets.

PURPORT

One in goodness attains higher planetary systems, like Brahmaloka or Janaloka, and there enjoys godly happiness. The word *amalan* is significant; it means free from the modes of passion and ignorance. There are impurities in the material world, but the mode of goodness is the purest form of existence in the material world. There are different kinds of planets for different kinds of living entities. Those who die in the mode of goodness are elevated to the planets where great sages and great devotees live.

Chapter 14: The Three Modes of Material Nature

TEXT 15

*rajasi pralayam gatva
karma-sangisu jayate
tatha pralinas tamasi
mudha-yonisu jayate*

SYNONYMS

rajasi—in passion; *pralayam*—dissolution; *gatva*—attaining; *karma-sangisu*—in the association of fruitive activities; *jayate*—takes birth; *tatha*—thereafter; *pralinas*—being dissolved; *tamasi*—in ignorance; *mudha*—animal; *yonisu*—species; *jayate*—take birth.

TRANSLATION

When one dies in the mode of passion, he takes birth among those engaged in fruitive activities; and when he dies in the mode of ignorance, he takes birth in the animal kingdom.

PURPORT

Some people have the impression that when the soul reaches the platform of human life, it never goes down again. This is incorrect. According to this verse, if one develops the mode of ignorance, after his death he is degraded to the animal form of life. From there one has to again elevate himself, by evolutionary process, to come again to the human form of life. Therefore, those who are actually serious about human life should take to the mode of goodness and in good association transcend the modes and become situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is the aim of human life. Otherwise, there is no guarantee that the human being will again attain to the human status.

Chapter 14: The Three Modes of Material Nature

TEXT 18

*urdhvam gacchanti sattva-stha
madhye tisthanti rajasah
jaghanya-guna-vrtti-stha
adho gacchanti tamasah*

SYNONYMS

urdhvam—upwards; *gacchanti*—goes; *sattva-sthah*—one who is situated in the mode of goodness; *madhye*—in the middle; *tisthanti*—dwell; *rajasah*—those who are situated in the mode of passion; *jaghanya*—abominable; *guna*—quality; *vrtti-sthah*—occupation; *adhah*—down; *gacchanti*—go; *tamasah*—persons in the mode of ignorance.

TRANSLATION

Those situated in the mode of goodness gradually go upward to the higher planets; those in the mode of passion live on the earthly planets; and those in the mode of ignorance go down to the hellish worlds.

PURPORT

In this verse the results of actions in the three modes of nature are more explicitly set forth. There is an upper planetary system, consisting of the heavenly planets, where

everyone is highly elevated. According to the degree of development of the mode of goodness, the living entity can be transferred to various planets in this system. The highest planet is Satyaloka, or Brahmaloka, where the prime person of this universe, Lord Brahma, resides. We have seen already that we can hardly calculate the wondrous condition of life in Brahmaloka, but the highest condition of life, the mode of goodness, can bring us to this.

The mode of passion is mixed. It is in the middle, between the modes of goodness and ignorance. A person is not always pure, but even if he should be purely in the mode of passion, he will simply remain on this earth as a king or a rich man. But because there are mixtures, one can also go down. People on this earth, in the modes of passion or ignorance, cannot forcibly approach the higher planets by machine. In the mode of passion, there is also the chance of becoming mad in the next life.

The lowest quality, the mode of ignorance, is described here as abominable. The result of developing ignorance is very, very risky. It is the lowest quality in material nature. Beneath the human level there are eight million species of life: birds, beasts, reptiles, trees, etc., and, according to the development of the mode of ignorance, people are brought down to these abominable conditions. The word *tamasah* is very significant here. *Tamasah* indicates those who stay continually in the mode of ignorance without rising to a higher mode. Their future is very dark.

There is opportunity for men in the modes of ignorance and passion to be elevated to the mode of goodness, and that system is called Krsna consciousness. But one who does not take advantage of this opportunity certainly will continue in the lower modes.